

Two Kinds of Desire

Written by Gina Lake

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There are desires that come from the ego and desires, or intentions, that come from Essence. They are experienced similarly, as drives to do or say something that will help achieve that desire or intention. The main difference is that the ego tells stories about its desires and fuels them with emotions (e.g., “When I get this, everyone will look up to me”), while Essence simply moves us to do or say something that will bring about its intentions. When we are aligned with Essence, our actions and speech feel clear and clean, and they lead to the intended result, while listening to the egoic mind often leaves us feeling confused and conflicted about what we want and how to get what we want.

The other most obvious difference is that getting what the ego wants brings only brief satisfaction and happiness, while getting what Essence wants brings deep happiness and fulfillment. You know when you are aligned with Essence’s intentions by feelings of excitement, joy, fulfillment, peace, relaxation, and contentment. These same feelings may be present when the ego gets what it wants, but they are more like a lower octave of the feelings that arise from Essence, and they don’t last.

The desires, or intentions, of Essence aren’t like the ego’s desires, which usually relate to enhancing the ego’s sense of safety, security, and superiority in the world. Rather, Essence desires, or intends, that we express more of the qualities of our true nature. It intends that we become more loving, accepting, wise, understanding, peaceful, and compassionate. It also intends that we fulfill a particular goal for this incarnation that was decided before birth.

That goal is not spelled out specifically before birth, nor is it known exactly how or if it will be achieved, or how it will unfold. All of this remains to be seen and depends to a great extent on our choices and the choices of others who are involved with us. Nevertheless, before every incarnation, we set out to accomplish something that will promote our evolution and the evolution of others. That goal is often referred to as the life task or life purpose.

The life purpose is achieved by following inner drives that come from Essence. Every day, we experience drives from Essence that serve Essence’s goals and also unfold our life in ordinary ways. Essence moves us not only to fulfill our life purpose, but also to feed ourselves and take care of other basic needs necessary for our survival and happiness. It moves us to go to the store, get an education, eat properly, develop our talents, make friends, and do other things to support ourselves and others in the world and to flourish physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually.

The ego is also concerned with our survival, growth, and happiness. The difference is the ego doesn’t know how to best achieve these things, while Essence does. So following our ego’s thoughts won’t have the same result as following Essence’s nudges. For instance, the ego might encourage you to work at a job that pays your bills but isn’t fulfilling. Essence is better able to lead you to meaningful work and ways of supporting yourself that fit your particular personality, strengths, and life purpose. Fulfillment is important to Essence and less important

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to the ego, which is more concerned about security, appearances, and amassing more money, things, and knowledge in its attempt to be superior to others.

Essence drives us through urges to act and speak, while the ego drives us with desires, which are thoughts pumped up by emotions (e.g., “I have to have this or else....”). The ego uses fear to inspire us to take action, while Essence inspires us through feelings of joy, excitement, happiness, and elation. When we feel those feelings, that is Essence encouraging us to take action in a particular direction. When we don't feel those feelings or when we feel the opposite ones—sadness, depression, and anger—that's a sign we are following the ego's dictates instead of Essence's intentions.

Following the ego may result in achievements, but those achievements may not result in happiness and fulfillment because the ego doesn't seek fulfillment as much as it seeks achievements and accumulation of wealth, prestige, security, and knowledge. The ego believes that what it seeks will bring it the happiness it desires, but it's wrong. Only by following Essence's intentions will we find the true happiness and fulfillment we are looking for.

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